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**EMPIRE 8 ANNOUNCES FOOTBALL ALL-CONFERENCE TEAM
Jared Manzer and Andy Episcopo Named Players of the Year**

ROCHESTER, NY – The Empire 8 announced its 2009 Football All-Conference team with senior wide receiver Jared Manzer being unanimously selected as Offensive Player of the Year and St. John Fisher College senior linebacker Andy Episcopo chosen as Defensive Player of the Year.

Manzer earned first-team all-conference honors as a wide receiver, all-purpose player, and defensive back and was named to the second team as a kick return specialist. He set single-season school records for touchdown receptions (15 so far) and holds the school career marks for receiving yards, touchdown catches, and total receptions.

Manzer enters NCAA play averaging seven catches per game and totaling 1,007 receiving yards in nine games. He averages 211.3 yards per game all-purpose, 21.3 yards per kick return, and 10.4 yards per punt return. Manzer leads the Saxons with seven pass break-ups and five interceptions, two of which were returned for touchdowns, including a school-record 98-yarder.

Episcopo, a second-team all-conference choice last season, enters the ECAC Northwest Bowl against Cortland averaging 9.7 tackles per game with 10 tackles for loss and 1.5 sacks. He has forced three fumbles, recovered a fumble, and recorded an interception.

Freshman quarterback Andrew Benkwitt of Utica College was named Empire 8 Rookie of the Year. He broke nearly every single-season school record, including completions, yards, attempts, touchdowns, completion percentage, and passing yards per game. Benkwitt completed 60.8 percent of his passes for 2,375 yards and 19 touchdowns.

Dave Murray was the unanimous selection as Empire 8 Coach of the Year as he led Alfred University to a share of its first conference title and only its second trip to the NCAA tournament, first since 1981.

Six players from the Saxons joined Manzer as all-conference first team selections. Sophomore quarterback Tom Secky, the 2008 Empire 8 Rookie of the Year, finished the regular season with a 168.8 efficiency rating, the best single-season mark in school history. He has thrown 25 touchdown passes and completed 63.6 percent of his passes. Senior running back Vinson Hendrix ran for 100 yards or more in seven of the Saxons' nine regular season games, averaging 5.5 yards per carry and rushing for 10 touchdowns.

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Senior left tackle Dave Carletta and junior right tackle Zach Morgan were each named to the all-conference first team, anchoring an Alfred line that has produced 414.4 yards of offense per game (175.1 rushing and 239.3 passing), while allowing only 12 sacks.

Sophomore linebacker Nick Clark averages 7.8 tackles per game and leads the Saxons in tackles for loss. Senior punter Pete Marley leads the conference with a 39.1 yards per punt average and has also landed nine punts inside the opponents' 20-yard line. Clark and Marley earned first-team honors for the first time.

Four players from Empire 8 co-champion St. John Fisher College joined Episcopo as all-conference first team selections. Junior left tackle Pete Soehner and senior right guard P.J. Colombo anchor the Cardinals' line which has produced 419.1 yards per game (151.8 rushing and 267.3 passing).

Senior defensive lineman Joel Vickers and senior defensive back John Sheridan were named to the all-conference first team for the Cardinals. Vickers enters ECAC play averaging 5.2 tackles per game and totaling five sacks and 11 tackles for loss. Sheridan, who plays the opponents' top receiver, has picked off four passes and broken up nine, while posting 5.5 tackles per game.

Senior Jared Burrell of Springfield College was named to the all-conference first team as a defensive back and as a return specialist. He enters ECAC play ranked second in Division III in punt returns (17.2 yards per return) and third in Division III in kick returns (32.8 yards per return). He averages four tackles per game, has intercepted two passes, and broken up five. Burrell is joined on the all-conference first team by classmate Cody Flanigan, a defensive lineman with four sacks and 12.5 tackles for loss.

Senior offensive lineman Jake Queener and senior defensive lineman Joe Goetz of Ithaca College repeated as first-team selections. Goetz finished the season with nine tackles for loss. Junior tight end Dan Higgins was named to the first team after leading the conference tight ends with 2.9 receptions per game and four touchdowns. Sophomore Andrew Rogowski was chosen as the all-conference first-team placekicker after connecting on 12 field goals and averaging 6.7 points per game.

Three players from Hartwick College were chosen as first-team honorees, including senior defensive lineman Ben Tomaino, a second-team choice in 2008. He enters ECAC play averaging 7.9 tackles per game and has registered conference-highs of 10 sacks and 15 tackles for loss. Senior running back Tosh DeMulder is averaging 102.1 yards per game, 5.8 yards per carry, and has scored 10 rushing touchdowns and two more receiving. Senior wide receiver Noah Koreman ranks ninth in Division III with 120 yards receiving per game and has caught 16 touchdown passes.

Senior linebacker Eric Kahl and senior defensive back Pete Vano of Utica College were named to the all-conference first team. Kahl averaged 10.6 tackles per game and recording 11.5 tackles for loss despite missing three games with a broken foot. Vano averaged 5.9 tackles per game and broke up four passes.

One member of each team was named that institution's representative on the 2009 Football Sportsman of the Year Team. Empire 8 emphasizes that "Competing with Honor and Integrity" is an essential component of a student-athlete's experience in conjunction with an institution's educational mission. These honorees have distinguished themselves and consistently exhibit the critical traits as outstanding sportsmen.

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Empire 8 2009 Football All-Conference Awards

Offensive Player of the Year: Jared Manzer, Alfred University

Defensive Player of the Year: Andy Episcopo, St. John Fisher College

Rookie of the Year: Andrew Benkwitt, Utica College

Coach of the Year: Dave Murray, Alfred University

First Team Offense

Name	Position	Yr.	School
Tom Secky	QB	So.	Alfred University
Tosh DeMulder	RB	Sr.	Hartwick College
Vinson Hendrix	RB	Sr.	Alfred University
Jared Manzer	WR/All-Purpose	Sr.	Alfred University
Noah Koreman	WR	Sr.	Hartwick College
Dan Higgins	TE	Jr.	Ithaca College
Dave Carletta	OL	Sr.	Alfred University
P.J. Colombo	OL	Sr.	St. John Fisher College
Zach Morgan	OL	Jr.	Alfred University
Jake Queener	OL	Sr.	Ithaca College
Pete Soehner	OL	Jr.	St. John Fisher College

First Team Defense

Cody Flanigan	DL	Sr.	Springfield College
Joe Goetz	DL	Sr.	Ithaca College
Ben Tomaino	DL	Sr.	Hartwick College
Joel Vickers	DL	Sr.	St. John Fisher College
Nick Clark	LB	So.	Alfred University
Andy Episcopo	LB	Sr.	St. John Fisher College
Eric Kahl	LB	Sr.	Utica College
Jared Burrell	DB	Sr.	Springfield College
Jared Manzer	DB	Sr.	Alfred University
John Sheridan	DB	Sr.	St. John Fisher College
Pete Vano	DB	Sr.	Utica College

First Team Special Teams

Name	Position	Yr.	School
Andrew Rogowski	PK	So.	Ithaca College
Pete Marley	P	Sr.	Alfred University
Jared Burrell	KR/PR	Sr.	Springfield College

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Second Team Offense

Name	Position	Yr.	School
Tim Bailey	QB	Jr.	St. John Fisher College
Baldwin Cunningham	RB	Sr.	Springfield College
Christian Zemaitis	RB	Fr.	St. John Fisher College
Cody Elliott	WR	Sr.	Utica College
Tom Vossler	WR	Jr.	Ithaca College
Tosh DeMulder	All-Purpose	Sr.	Hartwick College
Marcus Miles	TE	Sr.	St. John Fisher College
Corey Balcerzak	OL	So.	St. John Fisher College
Kevin Heinzelman	OL	Sr.	Ithaca College
Matt Lowney	OL	Jr.	St. John Fisher College
Eric Manning	OL	Sr.	Alfred University
Sean Meagher	OL	So.	Springfield College

Second Team Defense (Note: Two players tied for final spot at DB)

Name	Position	Yr.	School
Tracy Branch	DL	Jr.	Utica College
Kyle Macey	DL	Jr.	St. John Fisher College
Chris Sawyer	DL	So.	St. John Fisher College
Ken Goodwin	LB	Sr.	Springfield College
Nick Krajacic	LB	Sr.	St. John Fisher College
Chad Pieri	LB	Jr.	Alfred University
Wes Smith	LB	So.	Alfred University
Dave Ahonen	DB	Jr.	Ithaca College
Andre Bliss	DB	Sr.	St. John Fisher College
Alec Currier	DB	So.	Alfred University
David Vosburgh	DB	So.	St. John Fisher College
Spencer White	DB	So.	Ithaca College

Second Team Special Teams

Name	Position	Yr.	School
Eric Rockwood	PK	So.	Alfred University
Andrew Rogowski	P	So.	Ithaca College
Jared Manzer	KR/PR	Sr.	Alfred University

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Sportsman of the Year

Name	Yr.	School
Milton Harding	Sr.	Alfred University
Mark Thoefel	Sr.	Hartwick College
Brian Grastorf	Sr.	Ithaca College
Josh Carter	So.	Springfield College
Brad Carlton	Sr.	St. John Fisher College
Cody Elliott	Sr.	Utica College

Honorable Mention Offense

Name	Position	Yr.	School
Paul Decker	WR	Sr.	St. John Fisher College
Dan Ruffrage	WR	Jr.	Ithaca College
Keith Geraldson	TE	Sr.	Hartwick College
D.J. Loughlin-Pope	TE	Jr.	Alfred University
John Carlton	OL	Jr.	Springfield College
Tyler Olles	OL	So.	Utica College
Brad Carlton	All-Purpose	Sr.	St. John Fisher College

Honorable Mention Defense

Name	Position	Yr.	School
Adam Drescher	DL	Sr.	Ithaca College
Mike Raplee	DL	Fr.	Alfred University
Brenden Moore	LB	So.	St. John Fisher College
Jordan Spirou	LB	So.	Hartwick College
Eric Toporoff	LB	So.	Ithaca College

Honorable Mention Special Teams

Name	Position	Yr.	School
Dan Ruffrage	PR	Jr.	Ithaca College